유엔 세계인권대회를 위한
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KOREA NGOs' NETWORK
FOR THE UN WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
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Regional Meeting for Asia
World Conference on Human Rights
Bangkok, 29 March - 2 April 1993

HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION OR FOREIGN OCCUPATION

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

On behalf of the Korea NGOs' Network for the UN World Conference on Human Rights, which represents major nation-wide human rights NGOs in the Republic of Korea, we would like to express our hope that this Asian Regional Meeting will come up with constructive results for the World Conference on Human Rights and thereby contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights.

Mr. Chairperson,

As people from a country which underwent one of the worst experiences of colonial domination, we cannot help raising the issue of human rights violations under colonial domination or foreign occupation. In our experience, we realize that colonial domination or foreign occupation automatically means the total negation of human rights, especially the right to self-determination, and leads to the enslavement of one whole people or nation by another. Many other Asian countries similarly underwent unspeakable hardships from colonial domination or foreign occupation and became independent, at great sacrifice, through their determined struggles. We believe that in order to promote and protect human rights in our world, the support of people who are suffering from, and struggling against, colonial domination or foreign occupation is of the utmost importance, especially by countries in the Asian region.

In this context, it is disappointing that some of the same Asian countries, which themselves experienced colonization in the not-so-distant past, have now invaded, occupied and colonized their neighbouring countries and peoples.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Declaration on Principles on International Law Concerning Friendly Nations and Cooperation Among States, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights proclaim the right to self-determination to all peoples and territories which have not yet attained independence. The UN instruments and mechanisms have not as yet been successful in solving this extreme violation of human rights. Colonial domination and foreign occupation are clearly and undoubtedly a contravention of all existing international human rights norms. We may contrast a recent case whereby UN troops were dispatched to defend a small country from the agression and occupation of another, with previous inaction on behalf of other small countries finding themselves in a similar predicament. We can only conclude that this signifies the existance of double standards among the member countries of the UN.

Mr. Chairperson,

We call on all those countries to abandon their policy of colonization or occupation of other countries and to guarantee their neighbours' right to self-determination in full accordance with the relevant international norms and standards.

We hope the UN and the World Conference on Human Rights will take every possible measure to guarantee the right to self-determination of those peoples, including, but not limited to, the following measure;

Firstly, Peace Talks among all the parties concerned.

One need only look at history to realize the impossibility of achieving lasting peace without popular participation in the peace process. We see from a recent regional example that, difficult as it is to achieve, the setting up of negotiations at which all the parties to the conflict are present, is indispensible. It is unjust that only those forces that are equipped with weapons of mass destruction, often supplied by foreign governments or purchased by misappropriating humanitarian aid can be invited to the talks.

Secondly, Process for guaranteeing the right to self-determination.

We implore the UN to initiate concrete processes to facilitate the achievement of self-determination, such as free elections or referenda under UN auspices.

Thirdly, we would like to emphasize that all of these measures should be accompanied with appropriate mechanisms for the effective implementation of relevant international laws, UN resolutions and the outcomes of above-mentioned process.

Mr. Chairperson,

We wish to affirm that the first and most important lesson that we human beings have learned from the history of World War II is that any form of colonial domination or foreign occupation, with no exception, poses a serious threat to the peace of the world and to the human rights of all human beings. Again we affirm that the lesson which World War II has taught all peoples today is that colonial domination or foreign occupation should be opposed in every circumstance and with all our efforts.

Mr. Chairperson,

We countries of Asia have a moral responsibility to assist all in our power the peoples who are now suffering from foreign occupation or colonization, because we ourselves were supported by peace-loving peoples in the world when we were suffering from colonialism. We Korean people are grateful from the bottom of our heart for the solidarity which we received in the past.

Once again we affirm our committment to the peace and human rights of all human beings and especially to the right of self-determination of all the World's peoples.

Thank you.